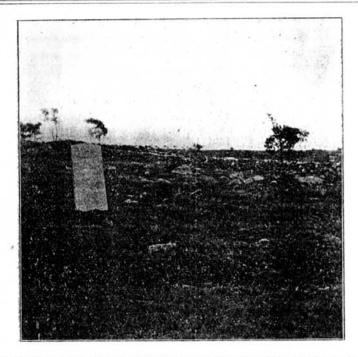
LEWISIANA

-LEWIS .. LETTER.-

BOOK VIII NUMBER

JOHN LEWIS, 1661, WESTERLY, R. I.



THE LEWIS BURYING GROUND, WESTERLY, R. I. ON BEACH ST., AT THE HEAD OF GREENMAN AVE. By Kindness of Carrie E. Barber, Westerly, R. L.

Chapter DXIV. From Westerly and its Witnesses. fenced spot, in the southeast corner of Kenyon. It is said that seven generaa field now owned by George D. Cross, tions of the Lewises, beginning with Esq., on the east side of the highway John (1) Lewis, are here buried; but

of the house of Thomas E. Saunders. The land once belonged to the Lewis The Lewis Ground is a large un- family, and afterwards to Arnold leading to Lettery Village, just below their tombstones are unlettered(v p 38 the village of Westerly, and in front | Vol. XIII).

This Spot Sacred to all of this Line should be immediately marked for all time by a massive boulder of Westerly Granite inscribed

IN MEMORIAM

LEWIS

1661------1906.

tains the remains of blacks. Here are the remains of Bristoe Congdon and his children.

INDIAN GROUND (10).

On the southwestern slope of the knoll, near the residence of Oliver D. Wells, Esq., in the village of Westerly, where now Mr. Wells has a fine grapery and summer-house, was anciently an Indian burying-place. In digging for the conservatory, Indian bones were brought to view.

INDIAN GROUND (11).

A small cluster of mounds, now almost obliterated, is found about a mile below Westerly, near the river, on the west side of a pond, upon the land of Peleg Barber. Tradition ascribes these graves to the red men.

Is this the path of human fame -To toil, and die, and leave no name?

KNOWLES GROUND.

This lies in the village of Dorrville. a few rods north of the residence of Amos C. Weeden, Esq., on the west side of the street, in the corner of a meadow, inclosed by a wall. Here we read. —

Joseph M. Knowles, born May 11, 1774, died Jan. 1, 1848.

Dorcas (wife of Joseph M. Knowles), died Sept. 12, 1861, age 83.

Anna (daughter of Joseph M. and Dorcas Knowles), d. May 4, 1861, age 53. Sarah Mumford, born May 5, 1753, died April 27, 1835.

Several graves have no inscriptions.

LANPHEAR GROUND (1).

This little burial-place lies about one hundred rods north of River Bend Cemetery, uninclosed, in a meadow. Only one grave appears.

LANPHEAR GROUND (2).

West of the Boom Bridge road. about forty rods north of the residence of Thomas Salt, and on lands of Truman Lanphear, is a yard inclosed with a picket fence, which contains a score or more of graves. We read, -

Joseph Crandall, died Feb. 6, 1837, age 64 ys., 9 mo.

Nancy (wife of Joseph Crandall), died Sept. 26, 1860, age 85 ys., 10 mo., 14 ds. Sophy A. (wife of Perry Lanphear), died Jan. 28, 1852, age 26 ys., 5 mo.

LANPHEAR GROUND (3).

This is located on the pasture land of Hon. N. F. Dixon, on the southwest slope of Cormorant Hill, about midway between the residence of Rev. A. B. Burdick and Lanphear Hollow, and within view from the Potter Hill road. Here we read, -

Capt. Clark Lanphear, died Feb. 11,

1865, age 77 ys., 5 mo., 15 ds. Wealthy (wife of Capt. Clark Lan-phear), died Nov. 24, 1822, age 30.

Keturah (wife of Capt. Clark Lan-phear), died Sept. 1, 1856, age 59 ys., 11 mo., 22 ds.

Capt. David Lanphear, died Sept. 21, 1861, age 35

Thomas M. Lanphear, died April 13, 1866, age 49 ys., 9 mo., 16 ds.

Child of Capt. Clark and Wealthy Lanphear. - Wealthy, died Jan., 1839, age 85.

Here are about forty uninclosed and uninscribed graves; some of them are very ancient, and contain the ashes of once conspicuous citizens.

LARKIN GROUND.

In the northern portion of the town, west of Dorrville, north of the railroad, on the farm of Hon. N. F. Dixon (formerly the Larkin farm). about fifty rods north of the farmhouse, inclosed by a rail fence, in a meadow, are about fifteen uninscribed graves. Here rest members. of the Larkin family.

LEWIS GROUND (1).

This is a large unfenced spot, in the southeast corner of a field now owned by George D. Cross, Esq., on the east side of the highway leading to Lottery Village, just below the village of Westerly, and in front of the house of Thomas E. Saunders. The land once belonged to the Lewis family, and afterwards to Arnold Kenyon. It is said that seven generations of the Lewises, beginning with John Lewis, are here buried; but their tombstones are unlettered.

John Lewis was one of the first settlers in the town.

Here rests the body of George Kenvon, born Sept. 28, 1714, died about 1796; also the remains of his wife, Anna (Lewis) Kenyon, born Nov. 27, 1716, died in her 90th year. Here, too, were buried Mary Lewis, wife of Joseph Lewis, born in 1688, died Nov. 27, 1762.

Joseph Barber, quite aged, died near 1835. Samuel Brown, and his wife, Amy Brown, both aged, and both died near 1840. Also, David Brown, buried near 1810, with great Masonic ceremonies. From inscribed slabs we copy, -

Arnold Kenyon, died Nov. 20, 1834, age 77.

Sally (wife of Arnold Kenyon), died June 15, 1832, aged 70.

William J. son of Arnold and Sally Kenyon), died April 2, 1832, aged 25.

Elnathan C. Brown, died Jan. 27, 1829, age 32.

LEWIS GROUND (2).

On the crest of a gravel hill, south of the house of Pardon Lewis, is the burying-ground of this name. The location is a pleasant one, but the ground has been neglected. No fence incloses it, and no head-stones mark the spot where repose some of the progenitors of this family. It contains perhaps a dozen graves.

NOYES GROUND.

This is located on the old Noyes farm, on a high knoll, a number of rods north of the shore road, in a pasture, and is well inclosed by a wall. Here we may read, -

Col. Joseph Noyes, died March 13, 1802, age 75.

Barbara (relict of Col, Joseph Noves),

died Sept 7, 1814, age 80.

Col. Thomas Noyes, died Sept, 19, 1819, age 65. "An officer in the Revolutionary army, and 21 years in the General Assembly

Mrs. Lydia Noyes (wife of Col. Thomas

Noyes), died Nov. 15, 1798, aged 39. Sanford Noyes, died Aug. 8, 1843, age 82. "A soldier of the Revolution."

Martha (wife of Sanford Noyes), died Sept. 5, 1860, aged 79.

Doct. James Noyes, died Nov. 6, 1856, in his 89th year.

Elizabeth Noyes, died Sept. 13, 1845,

We omit the names of children. Some graves are without inscriptions.

NYE GROUND.

This lies some ten rods west of the cross road, between the post-road and Dorrville, near where the pound road begins, a few rods northeast from the residence of Mr. Samuel Russell Nye, in the corner of an orchard, well cared for, though not inclosed. Here we read, -

Sarah (wife of Samuel Nye, and dau. of Joseph and Lydia Saunders), died

Oct. 18, 1857, age 79.
Frances (dau. of Samuel and Sarah Nye), died April 4, 1865, in her 59th year.

Eliza (wife of Samuel R. Nye, and dau. of Maxson and Mary Chase), died

July 25, 1853, age 44. Samuel R. M. (son of Samuel R. and Eliza Nye), died Oct. 3, 1860, age 22.

PARK GROUND.

This is on the north side of the post-road, by the side of the highway, a few rods east of the residence of Christopher Rathbun, near where the shore road enters the post-road. Here we read, -

The Rev. Joseph Park, died March 1, 1777, in his 72d year, and 45th year of his ministry.

Abigail (the wife of the Rev. Joseph Park), died Oct. 19, 1772, in her 68th year.

Sanford Gavit, died April 27, 1833, age 73.

Sanford Gavitt, died Aug. 3, 1852, in his 50th year.

I am told that here lie the remains of Edwin D. Gavitt, of the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment, who was wounded at Newburn, N. C., and died in a hospital in New York.

Near a dozen graves are without inscribed stones. ·

PECKHAM GROUND (1).

This is found in the northeastern part of the town, on the farm of Samuel Peckham, Esq., about thirty rods east of the farm-house, on a knoll, inclosed by a fence, in a pas-Though without lettered ture. stones, here lie Daniel B. Peckham, and his wife, Olive Peckham, and their children.

PECKHAM GROUND (2).

This lies in the northeastern portion of the town, on the road leading into Charlestown, on the east side of have been if years old at the begin-ning and most likely saw service before

Its end. Who can tell about that?
Who can tell if any of his descendants still live? Surely some of those who sheet here lived through trouble-some time of the Revolution. some tim

Body of John Lewis Marked by Flat Wall Stone.

ONE OF WESTERLY'S FOUNDERS.

Lies with Sixty Others Off Beach Street on Side Hill-Some Stones Gone.

In the list made in 1727 of all the freemen of Westerly, from the first settlement thereof, the name of John Lewis stands as number seven. He was one of the first settlers, as his name, is found annexed to some of the papers by which the tract known as Mis-quamicut was ceded to the white people. This John Lewis built him a house in what is now the lower part of the village, where he died, and is buried with six generations of his descendants in the rocky pasture on the side of the hill just off Beach street, nearly opposite the end of Greenman avenue. His grave is unmarked save by a flat wall stone, bearing no in-scription by which to identify it. The are in the little plot about sixty aves, only two of which are marked by lettered stones, while two other stones with inscriptions lie upon the ground. The plot itself is uninclosed and cattle wander over it at their own will. Yet here sleep some of Westerly's earliest founders and men of sterling worth.

This John was the progenitor of all the Lewis families in this section of the country. Some one should take thought and recon-their sleeping place from entile obliteration. The little mounds are fast sinking to or below the level of the surrounding earth, the headstones falling to or sinking into the ground, and in a little while, like other graveyards in this vicinity, it will be forgotten. There Deacon C. H. Brown and has been were once other lettered stones here since 1865. The time piece has been which have been removed, as Denison in "Westerly and Its Witnesses" gives the following as names appearing therein in 1867. Arnold Kenyon and Sallie his wife and their son William C. These are gone.

maining bear the following inscriptions: 'In memory of Elnathan C. Brown, who died Jan. 27, 1829, aged 32.' It is said that he was the father of the wife of Theophilus Hyde. The others are children of Francis S. and Sarah West, and are marked, "Francis E., died Oct. 13, 1838, aged B months and 6 days.

Happy infant early best, Rest in peaceful slumber rest Early rescued from the cares, Which increase with growing years.'

"Charles, died Aug. 11, 1841, aged 4 months.

I no smiling pleasure knew, In no gay delights could view, Joyless sojourner was I, Only born to weep and die.

"Mary Amie, died Feb. 14, 1846, aged 3 years 8 months and 4 days. Dearest daughter thou hast left us, Here thy loss we deeply feel. But 'tis God that hath bereft us, He can all our sorrows heal.'

AN OLD HALL CLOCK.

The Handiwork of William Stillman in the bad, Eightenth Centary to Be Found in Many Westerly Homes.

nsh

1868

hgh

ma-

It was not long ago that the tall hall clock that has been handed down by ancestors to find a safe and honored corner in the homes of their des cendants today could have been bough for a song. No longer is there to found the dust-covered and out-of as pair old clock, put away in some and garret-in-the country because it seem ed too good to put into the woodphe. For the country homesteads have been ransacked long since and kinder hands have come into possession of these old timepieces which bid fair to be handed down to future generations and receive better care than they did even in their youth.

William Stillman, who was born about 1766, died at the age of ninety two years, was a local genius of Westerly and during his life time made many of the clocks that are to be found in many homes of this town still keeping the time of the day as correctly as in their youthful day

One of his clocks is in possession of running since a date not far from the first of the eighteenth century and during that time has seen many changes in ownership. It was been eir son William owned by Abram Coon, a paster of the Those still re-First Seventh-day Baptis, characteristics

Bodies-Cancovered I hose in the Old Lewis Burying Growing

Regarding the article that was printed in last evening's Sun concerning the unearthing of a number of skeletons by workmen excavating for a tennis court on Moore road, off Beach street, the following data concerning the old burying ground that formerly existed at the spot has been submitted b a readery who signs the communication "E." The letter follows:

In last evening's edition of The Sun mention is made of the digging up of bodies on the Moore land in making the foundations for a new tennis court and the question arose of whom they may be. This is easily solved.

may be. This is easily solved.

This is generally known as the Lewis Burying ground. John Lewis, one of the first settlers of Westerly and a number of descendants, are buried here. In one of the Early Land Evidences of Westerly may be found the following: "That a reserve of sald burying ground was made for the Lewis family forever."

This John Lewis came from Wales, England, about 1640, and settled on the southern border of Rhode Island and what is now Westerly.

The first trace of him was in March 22, 1661, when his name was signed to an article in regard to Misquamicutt (Westerly.)

In October, 1668, he was admitted as freeman and in May 18, 1669, his name appears among the list of inhabitants, and September 17, 1669, he took the oath of allegiance. He understood the Indian dialect well and was able to copverse in the same. He probably died about 1690. He left a family of eight children.

His remains were buried on his Arnold Kenyon died Nov. 20, 1834, aged nomestead farm, said burying ground 77 years. Sally (wife of Arnold is on the east side of Beach street Kenyon) died June 15, 1832, aged 70. Copposite Greenman avenue. This land Was owned by the Lewises, then the aged 32."

Kenyons and Crosses and Charles Perry and the present owners.

It is said that seven generations where buried, all descendants of the John Lewis.

All or nearly all of the Lewises in the towns of Westerly. Hopkinton, Richmond and Exeter descended from this John Lewis. It is only a few years ago that the stones were recommond, (most of them unlettered) and the graves leveled off. Nearly sixty bodies were buried there. "E."

In Westerly and Its Witnesses may be found the following:

Lewis Ground (1)

"This is a large unfenced spot in the southeast corner of a field now owned by George D. Cross, Esq., on the east side of the highway leading to Lottery village just below the village of Westerly and in front of the house of Thomas E. Saunders. The land once belonged to the Lewis family and afterwards to Arnold Kenyon.

"It is said that seven generations of the Lewises, beginning with John Lewis, are here buried, but their tomb

stones are unlettered. "John Lewis was one of the first settlers in Westerly. Here rests the body of George Kenyon born Sept. 28, 1714 and died about 1796, also the ramains of his wife Anna (Lewis) Kenyon born Nov. 27, 1716, and died in her 90th year. Here, too, were burled Mary Lewis wife of Joseph Lewis, born in 1688 and died November 27; 1762 Joseph Barber, quite aged, died near 1835. Samuel Brown and his wife Amy Brown, both aged, both died near 1840. Also David Brown buried near 1810, with great Masonic cere-From inscribed slabs are: monies. Arnold Kenyon died Nov. 20, 1834, aged

Lewis Graves Unmarked

July 25, 1977
The letter in the July 22, 1977
issue of The Sun, from Nina
Barber Clark, pertaining to the
Lewis Burial Ground was interesting and appreciated.

I am a 10th generation decendent of John Lewis. While doing research at the Westerly Public Library, I also read about the terrible desecration of the Lewis Burial Ground apparently with the knowledge of Westerly. Town officials. This burial ground was a grant, inperpetuity, for Lewis family burials. I don't understand how anybody had the legal right to destroy it.

Last year, the United States of America celebrated its 200th birthday. Much money was appropriated, by Congress, for this celebration. It would have been greatly appreciated if the Town of Westerly had used some of this money to honor those people who were the first colonial settlers of Westerly; such as freeing those brave men and women from the concrete and asphalt that now covers their graves.

I think that restoration of this burial ground, or at least a plaque to identify its former a existence, could be an excellent project for the Westerly or Rhode Island Historical Societies.

Thomas A. Lewis SMSgt, USAF (Ret.)

Oakdale, Conn.



Second-Closs postage paid, Westerly, Rhade Island, 02891

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1030 **K**oute 163 Oakdale, CT 06370 September 6. 1977

Pept of Social & Rehabilitative Services Veterans Affairs Attention: Mr. Connally 46 Aborn Street Providence, RI 02903

Dear Sir:

I am writing in the hope that you can assist some descendents of John Lewis in restoring his burial place.

John Lewis resided in Westerly, Rhode Island between 1630 and 1690. He was one of the original settlers of Westerly, RI. In October 1668 he was admitted as a freeman and on September 17, 1669 he took the oath of allegiance. He probably died about 1690, in Westerly. His remains were buried on his homestead farm, which was on the west side of Beach Street, opposite Greenman Avenue, in Westerly. This reserve of burial ground was "made for the Lewis Family forever." and proof of it can be found in the early land evidences of Westerly, RI.

The book, Westerly and Its Witnesses states that the burial ground was a large unfenced spot in the southeast corner of a field now owned by George D. Cross, Esq. This posperty is now owned by the George C. Moore Co. of Westerly, RI.

The following is recorded in the Westerly Land Evidence, vol 1, p. 89. "Vandalism of a sort has apparently desecrated this old cemetary, however, for in 1936, on what is now Moore Road, on the right-hand side as one enters from Beach Street, excavations had been made for a tennis court, and it looked as if the stones had been removed, and the whole graveyard, along with other land about it, had been filled in and smoothed over." Other written accounts of this desecration are more explicit whereby human bones were unearthed.

Mrs. Ruth [Lewis] Auwater of Troy, Illinois has written to the Moore Co about placing a plaque on this site, but they were not receptive. Mrs. Nina Clark of Westerly has had a number of articles in the Westerly Sun about this grave yard and I have also written to the editor (see enclosed copy). We have not obtained any results,

We would be very appreciative of any help that you could provide us.

I am a 10th generation decendent of John Lewis.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Lewis SMSgt, USAF Retired

PEOPLE'S FORUM



CAPT. CARD HOUSE — Probably Westerly's oldest house, was built between 1690 and 1710. The main house has been added to; so that today the chimney comes out of the center of the roof. It is located on Margin Street.

The Lewises of Westerly

July 20, 1976
I have a picture of the old
Lewis house on Margin St., said
to have been built in the 1690s
and I am sending you a copy.
The picture of the old house was
taken more than 70 years ago atmy grandmother's request,
because her parents lived in the
house and she was married
there. My grandmother was
Anna Lewis and she married
William Denison Hall in Dec.
1858.

The picture was taken before the addition was built on and is now owned by Mr. Harvey Perry. The house was called the Capt. Card house and my father told me the captain had the unusual given name of Madrelerons.

Lewis house on Margin St., said to have been built in the 1690s and I am sending you a copy. The picture of the old house was taken more than 70 years ago at taken more than 70 years ago at Lewis and Kenyon burying my grandmother's request, because her parents lived in the Moore property on Beach St.

John Lewis 1st was given a large grant of land, extending from East Ave. to the Pawcatuck River and he is said to be buried there. This was quite a large ground and there were many unlettered stones but there were large gravestones

inscribed with the names of those buried there.

My great-grandparents, Nathan W. and Mercie Hall Lewis had a daughter, Lucy Ann, buried there, and I have been there many times with my grandmother.

It would seem in this Bicentennial Year that the memory of our earliest settlers should be honored.

Nina Barber Clark Westerly, R.I.

(There are 21 burying grounds in Westerly designated as Historical Cemeteries by the R:I. Graves Registration Committee. The Lewis and Kenyon Burying Ground is-not one of them. However, on Pages 287-288 of "Westerly and Its Witnesses, 1626-1876" by Rev. Frederic Denison, written in 1878, there is: "Lewis Ground (1), This is a large unfenced spot, in the southeast corner of a field now owned by George D. Cross, Esq., on the east side of the highway leading to Lottery Village, just below the village of Westerly, and in front of the house of Thomas E. Saunders. The land once belonged to the Lewis family, and afterwards to Arnold Kenyon. It is said that seven generations of the Lewises, beginning with John Lewis, are here buried; but their tombstones are unlettered. John Lewis was one of the first settlers in the town . . ." Just where this plot is, in relation to present day streets and buildings, I do not know. Editor.)

PEOPLE'S FORUM

John Lewis, an Early Settler

July 29, 1976 As another descendant of John Lewis, I would like to comment further on the Lewis Burial Ground.

While doing research at the Westerly Public Library, I found a yellowed newspaper clipping in the back of A.J. Langworthy's "Lewis Family", (a typewritten manuscript with no date), from which I quote:

"In last evening's edition of The Sun, mention is made of the digging up of bodies on the Moore land in making the foundations for a new tennis court and the question arose of whom they may be. This is easily solved.

"This is generally known as the Lewis Burying Ground. John Lewis, one of the first settlers of Westerly and a number of descendants, are buried here. In one of the Early Land Evidences of Westerly may be found the following: "That a reserve of said burying ground was made for the Lewis family forever'."

John Lewis came to Newport from Wales about 1640 and subsequently helped to settle the Town of Westerly. I think it is of prime importance that a suitable marker be erected to his memory.

Mr. James Lewis Carroll, another descendant who visited from Honolulu earlier this month, was very successful in his search for family history in this area. However, had he not previously contacted family members through his letter to The Sun in June, he no doubt would have returned to Hawaii still unaware of the whereabouts of John Lewis.

Marjorie W. Anderson North Stonington, Ct.

Lewis Burying Ground

Feb. 21, 1977

I note that even in the last century The Westerly Sun was quoted in Lewisiana, the Lewis Family Newsletter, warning that something should be done about the preservation of the Lewis Burying Grounds.

American Revolution Waitstill Lewis wa decendant of John still's father, Jose have been buried Burying Grounds. Is there anyone

seen a copy, that you have had letters and articles on that topic recently. Could you remark editorially on the state of the Lewis Burying Grounds now? And do you have a particular recommendation at this time?

I am a Lewis, descended from Waitstill Lewis, born in Westerly

letter 3/1/77

ca. 1734, who fought in the American Revolution at Boston. Waitstill Lewis was probably a decendant of John, and Waitstill's father, Joseph (?) may have been buried in the old Running Grounds.

Is there anyone in Westerly now working on the preservation of the cemetery? I know that Walter Lewis of Oakdale, Ct., and Nina Barber Clark of Westerly, are interested and concerned.

Ruth C. (Lewis) Auwarter 208 East Center St.

Troy, Ill. 62294

(Copies of this inquiry have

been mailed to both Mr. Lewis and Mrs. Clark — Editor)

Lewis Graves Unmarked

July 25, 1977
The letter in the July 22, 1977
issue of The Sun, from Nina
Barber Clark, pertaining to the
Lewis Burial Ground was interesting and appreciated.

I am a 10th generation decendent of John Lewis. While doing research at the Westerly Public Library, I also read about the terrible desecration of the Lewis Burial Ground — apparently with the knowledge of Westerly Town officials. This burial ground was a grant, in perpetuity, for Lewis family burials. I don't understand how anybody had the legal right to destroy it.

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I think that restoration of this burial ground, or at least a plaque to identify its former existence, could be an excellent project for the Westerly or Rhode Island Historical Societies

> Thomas A. Lewis SMSgt, USAF (Ret.)

Oakdale, Conn.

Honor to Early Westerly Settlers

July 20, 1977

Recently I had a pleasant visit . with Mrs. Ruth Attwater of Troy, Ill., who is interested in the location of the old Lewis burying ground. This ground was on Beach St., nearly opposite Greenman Ave. on the east side of Beach St. on a side hill, where Moore Road houses and the tennis court are located. John Lewis came to Westerly in 1661 and was given a large grant of land, and this ground is on a portion of that land. It is on record in the Town Hall that this land was set aside for that purpose.

The first Moore house was built in 1915, and some time later it was reported that workmen bulldozing for the tennis court unearthed human bones.

In Westerly and Its Witnesses by Denison, he reported that it was believed that John Lewis was buried there, and seven generations of the Lewis family. He also records a large number of inscribed grave stones including one of David Brown, who was buried with great Masonic ceremonies and Elnation Brown whose portrait hangs in the Babcock-Smith House on Granite St.

In Lewisania, a history of the Lewis family by Merton Lewis, there is a picture of inscribed stones in the old burying ground so this is all proof that this is a historic spot and should be recognized. I also am a Lewis descendant as my grandmother was Anna Lewis, and she had a sister who was buried there so I am especially interested. I wisited there with my grandmother in my early years and can remember about this.

I understand that recently a request was made to have a marker or plague placed there to honor our early Westerly settlers, but in a letter from a Mr. Davis — speaking for the Moore firm — the request was refused.

Nina Barber Clark

Westerly, R.I.



GEORGE C. MOORE CO.

Westerly, Rhode Island 02891 Telephone 401-596-2816

June 13, 1977

Mrs. E. A. Anderson, Jr. Sleepy Hollow Road
North Stonington, CT 06359

Dear Mrs. Anderson:

Mr. Thomas Moore has discussed your letter of June 7 with me and asked that I answer you. Although we appreciate your desire to identify the site of the Lewis Burial Ground, it would be very difficult to chose an appropriate location on property owned by the George C. Moore Company in Westerly, Rhode Island. Perhaps you are not aware that the mill site as well as adjacent land occupied by several dwellings is owned by the company. We must always consider possible future utilization and it is conceivable the arrangement you propose would complicate development.

This has been a hard decision for us to make but we feel there is no other choice but to decline our approval of a marker. We hope you appreciate our position and will not bear any animosity because of it.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE C. MOORE COMPANY

Edward E. Davis, Corporation Secretary

EED: CRD

48 Urso Drive Westerly, R.I. 02891

Morth Stonington, CT 06359

March 13, 1981

Subject: John Lewis Burial Ground No. 1

Ref

: My Letter/Nov. 7, 1980

Ed Davis/Letter June 13, 1977

Mrs. E.A. Anderson, Jr. Letter/March 1, 1976

Dear Tom:

Regarding our verbal discussion at your office on or about January 2, 1981. I hope we can accommodate Mrs. Anderson regarding the placement of a suitable marker at the above burial site on Moore's Road.

Mr. Edwin Connelly, Director of R.I. Historical Cemeteries, has forwarded his registration document regarding Westerly Historical Cemetery No. 50 to the local Town Hall. I have attached a copy for your review. R.I. law provides for the legal registration of historical burial sites.

I would be most happy to assist you or Mr. Ed Davis in arranging the placement of R.I. Historical Marker No. 50 along with a suitable memorial provided by the Lewis family.

Please advise.

Sincerely,

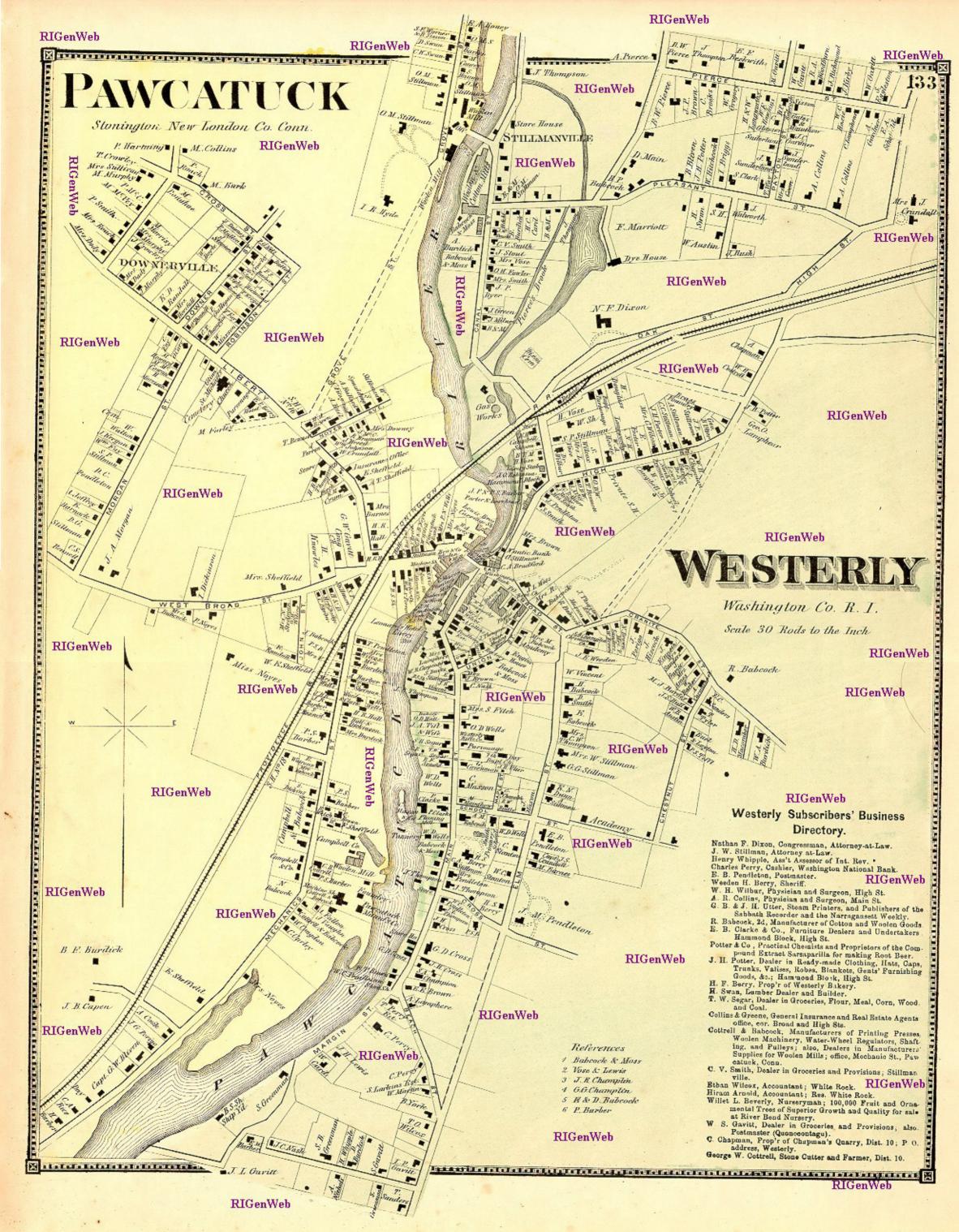
h E. Culahan

Attach: (2)

cc: Mrs. E.A. Anderson, Jr. 89 Sleepy Hollow Rd.
N. Stonington, CT 06359
Tel. 1-203-599-1424

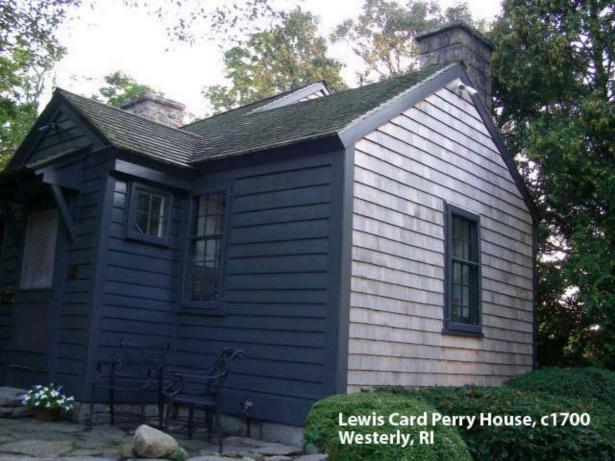
Ed Connelly

Sens John John John John John John John John	Amos Lewis, 1790 census, Charleston, RI right column, 16th line from bottom	(Amos died this year)
The Charteston (1) 300 300 6 Correct rows (1) 300 300 100 1188 Charteston (1) 300 300 100 100 100 100 100 100 100 100	all 14 Rathand	Shedule Continued
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Forgotten cemetery

holds remains of one of town's founders

By Ashley St. Pierre

WESTERLY - Peter David Lewis never thought about his heritage too hard until middle age, when members of his family began to pass away. Now it's an integral part of who he is and what he fights for.

Lewis, 53, is a descendant of John Lewis, one of Westerly's founders. He lives in Stratford, Conn. where he works as a graphic designer and has been trying to get a long-forgotten family burial ground preserved.

John Lewis came to the New World from Wales, circa 1640 or 1650, and died in 1690 (leaving a "great many sons").

In 1661 Lewis and a group of men came to buy land from Chief Sosoa, an Indian captain of the Narragansett Tribe. It

Narragansett Tribe. It was described as the Misquamicut Purchase, from the Pawcatuck River to Weekapaug. It

was later broken up in to different towns including Charlestown and



Photos courtesy of Peter David Lewis

Peter David Lewis is a tenth generation descendent of Westerly founder John Lewis.

Westerly.

That was 10 generations back from himself,

spotlight

Lewis said, adding that the Lewises spent "a good four generations in Rhode Island" before moving to New York State, but not before leaving a number of family members buried in Rhode Island soil.

And many of those members, Lewis said, including the first John Lewis, were buried in the soil of the family farm.

The Lewis Farm

stretched all the way from the Pawcatuck River to where the Moore Company is now. And the small patch of land where his ancestors are buried is the area Lewis is trying to have protected.

The cemetery, after many of its headstones and grave markers were lost, was torn up, making room for Moore Road, houses for the Moore family and later tennis courts.

The land was well known as a graveyard into the late 1800s, Lewis said, adding that there are photographs of the land with headstones still intact and the inscriptions on the stones recorded in the 1878 book "Westerly and its Witnesses."

The cemetery was forgotten until about 1970. The Moore Company wanted to make more parking space, and planned a parking lot where the tennis courts were. The courts were turned up but the paving never happened due to an



Photo courtesy of Peter David Lewis

A 1939 aerial survey photo of Westerly, with Lewis family burial grounds marked by arrow.

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home STORIES

*Cemetery

from page I

outcry through letters from residents.

Lewis said that 100 years ago there was much less public interest in preservation, nothing like the current National Register of Historic Places and local historical societies, and laws preserving cemeteries had not yet been enacted.

Harvey C. Perry II, who said he is involved in the story "peripherally," lives at the site of first Lewis family house, The Lewis-Card-Perry House, at 12 Margin St.

Perry is the president of the Westerly Land Trust and senior vice president and president of the Office of Nonprofit Resources for the Washington Trust Company.

Perry said that members

of Lewis family have been in contact with him over the years, and he heard of the family cemetery from them years ago. When Perry had his house placed on the National Register of Historic Places last year, he received calls from family descendants and more information about the cemetery, including aerial maps and charts from Peter David Lewis.

From what he was told, the cemetery was abandoned and not taken care of, and probably had unmarked graves and flat fieldstones, which are easy to ignore.

"The company could be a bit embarrassed," he said, adding that some family members just want the Moore Company to place a sign on the site.

"I don't really have a dog in this fight," he said, and only knows what he has heard from the Lewis family. But if the cemetery is where the Lewis family claims it is, Perry said, there are Rhode Island statutes to protect historical cemeteries, and he said it depends on how hard the family wants to push the envelope.

"As one of John Lewis' descendants, if we had never known where he was buried we would say 'well, it's out there somewhere," Lewis said. But since he knows, he would personally like it protected.

"We can't ignore that," he said.

Lewis wrote a letter to

Peter Moore, president of the Moore Company, who responded saying he would look into the history of the town and the land.

Lewis said he recognizes that he realizes the land is now private property but wants discussion between the Lewis descendants, the property owners and the town at large. He would like the fence around the area removed and a sign that recognizes the cemetery and preventing it from being built over and forgotten yet again.

"It is still a cemetery," Lewis said. "Let's remember the people that we know are there." He feels it would be



ASHLEY ST. PIERRE / The Press

A fenced off grass area on the Moore Company property. The burial ground is located near the far end of the grass, near the fence.

a benefit to the whole if the served, out of respect for burial ground were pre- Westerly's founders.

The People's Forum

Preservation of cemetery is important to our community heritage

I was very pleased to read the article last week about the Lewis Cemetery on Beach Road.

I have hoped to find support among the residents of Westerly for preserving the last resting place of one of the town's founders and many of its earliest settlers.

As the article notes, the presence of the cemetery was never actually forgotten. An earlier newspaper article appeared in Westerly circa 1905, extolling the need for taking care of this important historical cemetery and listing some of the headstone inscriptions. Members of the Brown, Kenyon and Babcock families were all laid to rest in this ground.

Again, in the early 1920s, when

the land was terraced and leveled for a tennis court, articles and letters were written calling instead for its preservation. The presence of human remains made it very clear that though the headstones may be removed, the cemetery persists.

This is a matter of importance not just to a few descendants of those buried here, but to the entire town of Westerly.

Preservation of memory takes effort and cooperation. I hope that the present owners of the land, The Moore Company, will be open to considering ways to ensure preservation of the land's integrity as a cemetery, and to mark it with an appropriate memorial. It is not my intention to spark a battle or

embarrass anyone into action but rather to simply persuade.

The cleaning of the Babcock cemetery, currently underway, is evidence that town residents care about their history and about showing respect for their forbears.

Certainly, preservation of the Lewis Burial Ground will depend on the interest of the citizens of Westerly, as expressed through their town government, historical and business groups, etc.

I can only bring the matter to people's attention, and hope the property's owners and neighbors will respond.

> Peter David Lewis Stratford, Conn.

Peter David Lewis 56 Franklin Avenue Stratford, CT 06614-5247 petros53@earthlink.net 203-377-4116

Peter Moore, President George C. Moore Company 36 Beach Street Westerly, RI 02891

Dear Mr. Moore,

The Moore Company has been a significant part of Westerly for many decades, and your family a significant presence in town affairs. In the interests of preserving knowledge of Westerly's history, I hope you may act to preserve a piece of that history which is in your care. I refer to the Lewis Burial Ground #1, which is located near the south end of the Moore Company parking, off of Beach Road. The cemetery is located along what was once Moore Road, on the site of the old tennis court which was removed in the mid 1970's, along with the houses lining Moore Road.

I imagine you already know the history and placement of the cemetery. On the present site of that tennis court is a wooded lot holding the remains of John Lewis, a founder of Westerly, with 7 generations of of his descendants, as well as members of the Kenyon, West and Brown families, and perhaps others. Until 1920 this lot was well known as a cemetery and contained headstones, both inscribed and plain, to mark the graves which go back to circa 1685. The stones were removed and the ground leveled to create the tennis court and housing on Moore Road. Since the houses and court were removed in the mid 1970's, the land has remained empty and unused as far as I know.

I would ask you to consider ways of preserving this small plot of land, perhaps working with the Westerly Historical Society, and the Land Trust to properly mark and protect the area. While the general location is still known, archeological work may need to be done to determine the exact boundaries of the cemetery, as state law requires before any known cemetery may be disturbed. I have spoken with Thomas Wright of the Historical Society and Harvey Perry of the Land Trust and am sure they would be interested in working with you on this.

As memory of the burial ground is lost, Westerly's history is also being lost. In past decades preservation of structures was not always a high priority. Many buildings and burial grounds were allowed to decay past the point of recovery. Contemporary interests have changed however, as the recent renovation of Westerly's Quaker burial ground attests, as well as the placement of the Lewis-Card-Perry house on the National Historic Register. Interest in the protection of this site goes back at least a century, as you may see in the newspaper article from the Westerly Sun of about 1905 that I enclose. In the 1920's at the time of the construction of the tennis court, similar calls for preservation were printed.

Mr. Moore, I speak only as a representative of the descendants of John Lewis, one with a personal interest in showing respect for the resting places of my ancestors. However I am sure it is also in the interest of the general public and the Town of Westerly that such respect is shown, and that memory is preserved. It would be to the Moore Company's great credit if it showed interest in considering ways of preserving and marking this burial land.

Hoping to hear from you, I remain Sincerely yours,

Peter David Lewis 56 Franklin Avenue Stratford, CT 06614-5247 petros53@earthlink.net 203-377-4116

Peter Moore, President George C. Moore Company 36 Beach Street Westerly, RI 02891

Dear Mr. Moore.

I am writing again about the condition of the Lewis family cemetery located within the Moore Company grounds. I hope that over the summer you have had an opportunity to learn a bit about the history of that land. I would imagine you have read the article that appeared in the Westerly Sun on July 5th concerning the cemetery, and perhaps the letter I wrote in response that appeared on July 14th. Thomas Wright, president of the Westerly Historical Society, tells me he has had a discussion with you about the cemetery, and that you have some doubts about whether these burials were actually on your property. Naturally you would need more than hearsay from myself before proceeding.

I am enclosing copies of the various newspaper articles, letters and book abstracts I have collected to demonstrate that there was indeed a viable cemetery in this location, in use for a full 200 years. The cemetery was indeed leveled and the bodily remains moved circa 1925. It would be easier to simply deny that any known cemetery occupied this area, now known for its flat terracing and tennis court. But both historical and anecdotal evidence all point to this being the location of the John Lewis Burial Ground. The fate of this cemetery has been a contentious matter for 100 years now, and many before me have called for a remedy to what we feel is a problem with the handling of the remains of our ancestors and town founders. Though the Moore Company certainly has the right to use its property, a decent respect for one's neighbors also calls for the mindful handling of places with great emotional resonance, places such as a historical cemetery.

While anecdotal evidence may not carry the same weight as written records, I would still like to repeat one story I heard recently from a local woman concerning her grandfather. The family story which was written down by her mother concerned her grandfather's attempt in about 1925 to rescue the remains of family members from "the cemetery next to the Moore Mill", because it was being torn up and the headstones lost. Though family stories are best taken with a grain of salt for the details, there is a large grain of truth here. People knew who was buried there. And people knew that human remains were being removed without an attempt to preserve the respect of a proper burial. At least one man made an attempt to protect his family burials and was worried enough about it to make sure the story was remembered by his family.

10 years ago the Pardon Lewis cemetery in Westerly was opened and moved to make room for school construction. The cemetery was opened competently by state archeologists, and the remains moved respectfully to a new cemetery. I wish such had been the practice back in 1925. There is no going back, but perhaps we can go forward by finding the remains where they lie, somewhere in their original vicinity, so that they can be protected, possibly moved, and memorialized properly. Perhaps any remains that can be located could be moved to a spot nearer the public road and placed under a memorial. I have hoped that construction records still held by your company might throw some light on this question. I would be very grateful for your cooperation in searching for more information.

I have tried to convince you of these things: that there was a cemetery; that it was removed without input from living relations or town historians; that it of historical importance to all, containing as it does, town founders; and finally that since the Moore Company benefited from the removal of the burials on land it now owns, it has some responsibility to address the concerns that have not been addressed since circa 1925. Putting this to rest would also be very good for your company's reputation.

I have tried not to be too specific with suggestions, as I wanted to give you time to think about this in different ways. But you can see where I am headed, I am sure. I have no doubt that there is a solution that would satisfy, indeed be good for, both your company, the town, and the many descendants who are concerned. Please contact me at any time to talk further, and/or contact Thomas Wright who can well represent the Westerly public's historic interests. While I may feel I am trying to right a wrong, it is with no sense of belligerence, and with a feeling that there is something to be done here of value to all, the Moore Company included.

Hoping to hear from you, I remain Sincerely yours,

Peter David Lewis

cc: Thomas Wright

News Article from "The Sun", circa 1921, from Westerly, RI Library:

"Bodies Uncovered-Those in Old Lewis Burying Ground" In last evening's edition of The Sun mention is made of the digging up of bodies on the Moore land in making the foundation for a new tennis court and the question arose of whom they may be. This is easily solved. This is generally known as the Lewis Burying ground.... This John Lewis came from Wales, England, about 1640, and settled on the southern border of Rhode Island and what is now Westerly....

Lewis Cemeteries Westerly Rhode Island

Registered in the Rhode Island Cemetery Project As:
WY050 JOHN LEWIS GROUND #1 WESTERLY

MOORE RD ->125 ft. E of tel pole #2726

From "Westerly and its Witnesses" published 1867, Rev. Frederic Denison (of 116 cemeteries recorded)

LEWIS GROUND (1): This is a large unfenced spot, in the southeast corner of a field now owned by George D. CROSS, Esq., on the east side of the highway leading to Lottery Village, just below the village of Westerly, and in front of the house of Thomas E. SAUNDERS. The land once belonged to the LEWIS family and afterwards to Arnold KENYON. It is said that seven generations of the LEWISes, beginning with John LEWIS, are here buried; but their tombstones are unlettered. John LEWIS was one of the first settlers in the town.

Here rests the body of George KENYON, born Sept. 28, 1714, died about 1796; also the remains of his wife, Anna (LEWIS) KENYON, born Nov. 27, 1716, died in her 90th year. Here, too, were buried Mary LEWIS, wife of Joseph LEWIS, born in 1688, died Nov. 27, 1762.

Joseph BARBER, quite aged, died near 1835. Samuel BROWN, and his wife Amy BROWN, both aged, and both died near 1840. Also, David BROWN, buried near 1810, with great Masonic ceremonies.

- * Arnold KENYON, died Nov. 20, 1834, age 77.
- * Sally (wife of Arnold KENYON), died June 15, 1832, aged 70.
- * William C. (son of Arnold & Sally KENYON), died Aprl 2, 1832, aged 25.
- * Elnathan C. BROWN, died Jan. 27, 1829, age 32.

FIRST GENERATION - Peter David Lewis's Line

2624. John LEWIS was born in 1631 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He died in 1690 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He was married to UNKNOWN in 1665 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

Children were:

1312 i. John LEWIS Jr..

- ii. Jonathan LEWIS died in Aug 1710. He was father of 8 children, 3 sons and 5 daughters.
- iii. Daniel LEWIS died in Feb 1718.
- iv. James LEWIS died on 6 Sep 1745.
- v. David LEWIS was born in 1667. He died on 6 Sep 1718.
- vi. Israel LEWIS was born in 1669. He died on 28 Jun 1719.
- vii. Samuel LEWIS died in Jan 1739.
- viii. Dorcas LEWIS.

SECOND GENERATION

1312. John LEWIS Jr. was born in 1650 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He died on 22 Apr 1735 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He was married to Ann LAMPHEAR in 1682 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

1313. **Ann LAMPHEAR** was born in 1665 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. She died on 29 Feb 1748 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

Children were:

656 i. Joseph LEWIS.

- ii. Sarah LEWIS was born on 17 Aug 1687.
- iii. Mary LEWIS was born on 4 May 1689.
- iv. Ann LEWIS was born on 6 Jul 1691.
- v. Abigail LEWIS was born on 20 May 1693.
- vi. John LEWIS was born on 30 Jan 1698.
- vii. William LEWIS was born on 1 Feb 1702.
- viii. Jerusha LEWIS was born on 11 Jan 1707.

THIRD GENERATION

656. Joseph LEWIS was born on 16 Oct 1683 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He died in 1762 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He was married to Mary WILCOX in 1706 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

657. **Mary WILCOX** was born in 1688 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. She died on 27 Nov 1752 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

1314. **Edward WILCOX** was born on 5 Nov 1662 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He died on 5 Nov 1750 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He was married to Martha HAZZARD in 1689 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

1315. **Martha HAZZARD** was born in 1666 in Exeter, Washington County, Rhode Island. She died on 9 Jan 1753 in Exeter, Washington County, Rhode Island.

328 i. Amos LEWIS.

FOURTH GENERATION

328. Amos LEWIS was born in 1719 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He died in 1790 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island. He was married to Eleanor GREENE in 1734 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.

329. Eleanor GREENE was born on 2 Mar 1718 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

658. **Benjamin GREENE** was born in Mar 1692 in Portsmouth, Newport County, Rhode Island. He died before 26 Jan 1756 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. He was married to Eleanor RANDALL on 19 Mar 1714 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

659. **Eleanor RANDALL** was born on 24 Jun 1694 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island. She died after Jul 1753. Children were:

329 i. Eleanor GREENE.

ii. Matthew GREENE.

Children were:

- i. Nathan LEWIS was born in 1735 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.
- ii. William LEWIS was born in 1737 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.
- iii. Matthew LEWIS was born about 1739 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.
- iv. Amos LEWIS Jr. was born about 1739 in Westerly, Washington County, Rhode Island.

164 v. Randall LEWIS.

- vi. Paul LEWIS was born in 1743 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.
- vii. Thankful LEWIS was born about 1745 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.
- viii. Greene LEWIS was born about 1745 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.
- ix. Humility LEWIS was born in 1747 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island.

FIFTH GENERATION

.....

164. Randall LEWIS was born in 1741 in Hopkinton, Washington County, Rhode Island. Died after 1800, Delhi, NY. He married Elizabeth "Elsie" RATHBONE who was born about 1745 in Exeter, Washington County, Rhode Island. Died after 1800, Delhi, NY Children were:

i. Joshua Lewis

iii. Randall LEWIS Jr. was born in 1767 in Rhode Island. He died in 1863 in Petersburg, Rensselaer County, New York. He died from smallpox.

Children OF RANDALL JR..

- 82 ii. Rowland LEWIS.
- iii. Caleb LEWIS was born on 16 Jun 1782 in Delhi, Delaware County, New York. He died in 1873 in Troy, New York.
- iv. Ruth LEWIS died in Bloomville, Delaware County, New York.
- v. Ellen LEWIS was born on 13 Feb 1803.
- vi. John LEWIS.
- vii. Olive LEWIS.
- viii. Joshua LEWIS.
- ix. Daniel LEWIS.

SIXTH GENERATION Joshua Randall LEWIS was born in 1788 in Delhi, NY. Died in Waukegan, III Nancy Kidder was born 1793 in Delhi, NY. Died in Waukegan, III Children were: Linus, born 1810, Warsaw, NY Charles, Betsy, George, Austin, Ruth, Joshua, Eliza, Cynthia, Homer, Lucy, Paulina, Amanda, James, Rhoda SEVENTH GENERATION Linus LEWIS was born in 1810 in Warsaw, NY. He married Harriet Lawrence Hoag who was born 1810, Philipstown, NY Children were: James Austin Randall Andrew **EIGHTH GENERATION** _____ James Austin LEWIS was born in ?? in Belfast, NY. He married Sabrina Renwick who was born 1846, Belfast, NY Children were: George

George LEWIS was born in 1875 in Belfast, NY. He married Clara Cook who was born 1876.

NINETH GENERATION

Victory, NY Children were:

Milton Evelyn